

17 August 2016

MEGA MAINTENANCE IN HUNTER VALLEY NEXT WEEK

Around 1000 contractors as well as Australian Rail Track Corporation staff will pick up the tools next week to deliver dozens of maintenance projects across the Hunter Valley coal rail corridor.

The pre-planned maintenance work will see everything from new rail be laid, to level crossing improvements, ballast cleaned and signalling work completed.

The maintenance work is taking place over more than 60 hours from 6am Tuesday 23 August through to the late evening of Thursday the 25th of August.

It will take place in the rail corridor from around Kooragang Island, North to Narrabri and between Muswellbrook and Ulan on the Ulan line.

“While there was severe disruption to railway services over the last few weeks due to industrial action, the critical nature and scale of the work means that the maintenance shutdown will proceed as planned,” ARTC’s Executive General Manager – Hunter Valley, Jonathan Vandervoort said.

“We will be working very closely with our customers to see what opportunities there are following the maintenance shutdown to recover from the industrial action period as best as possible.”

“Major maintenance tasks like re-railing and track reconditioning, where the track is rebuilt from the foundation up has been pre-planned months in advance and can potentially be million-dollar projects to deliver in their own right,” Mr Vandervoort said.

“Our focus is on safe, continuous and reliable operations and this maintenance shutdown is critical to ensuring the Hunter coal chain runs as seamlessly as possible.”

More than \$20 million in work will be delivered during the maintenance period.

“We deliver this work in a continuous period during a maintenance ‘closedown’ because it is a safer environment for our people to work when there are fewer trains running,” said Mr Vandervoort.

“It’s also far more efficient to package the vast amount of work needed into 62 hours rather than spread over many nights and in-between live running rail traffic.”

“We’d like to thank the community for their patience with us while this important works is delivered. We would also like to advise motorists to take care, slow down, allow for additional travel time and be cautious of trucks entering and exiting work sites.”

The next major Hunter Valley maintenance works period is currently scheduled for 11-14 October.

ENDS

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- In the early morning and late evenings local Hunter passenger trains will be impacted, please visit www.sydneytrains.info or www.nswtrainlink.info for passenger service impacts. Intercity trains to the Northwest (Tamworth/Armidale) will also be affected.
- The level crossing at Lowes Creek Road, Quirindi will be closed from both sides from 6:00pm Monday 22nd August to 8:00pm Thursday 25th August. Please use Black Gully Road if travelling to Werris Creek and if travelling to Quirindi please use South Bora Creek Road.